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THE  
ORIGIN AND SECRETS  
OF  
FREEMASONRY

BEING  
A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY THE REV. JOSEPH WILD, D.D.

*Chaplain Doric Lodge, A. F. & A. M., Toronto,*

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## THE ORIGIN AND SECRETS OF FREEMASONRY

THERE are two forms of Masonry upon which I will speak to-night—the *speculative* and the *operative*, which are not united. The operative one was the primary force of Masonry, while the speculative is now the most prominent. How came they to be separated? And will they ever again be united? I want to show you to-night how they came to be separated, and how Masonry itself originated, and in connection therewith, to turn your attention to the great Pyramid, for there are secrets connected with this structure that will throw some light on our Masonic conduct and ideas.

You will understand that when the world was overflowed by the flood, men had been living from 1,600 to 2,000 years. The average of the life was about 400 years. Now, a man could pick up considerable information in 400 years if men were as smart as we now are. Only eight persons were left from the destruction caused by the flood. What became of all the sciences, of the advancement and knowledge which the people prior to the flood gained? Is it to be entirely lost? Shall there be no key to the scientific attainments, and the progress of these ante-diluvians for those 2,000 years? Will Providence start the human race anew and blot out all that has gone before? I think not. But how will this knowledge be preserved to us? I believe it was arranged in the order of divine Providence that Shem should be the one to embody all the scientific, geometrical, sociological, and every other kind of knowledge that would be profitable to the new world, and that God ordered Shem to construct, after the flood, the Great Pyramid for this purpose—that is *the* Great Pyramid.

There are five hundred others, but all are mere imitations of this the largest which was built about 2,170 B.C., and which is situate a short distance from Cairo on the western banks of the river Nile. The builders located the immense structure on a limestone rock. Shem was a very proper person to be entrusted with such a charge, as he was born one hundred years before the flood, and lived for at least five hundred after it; in fact, he lived some fifteen years after Abraham was dead and gone; he lived, too, long enough to instruct the new world by bringing the knowledge of the old to them. By a kind Providence he was directed to put all this knowledge into one building. Having thus stored away these sciences, a *speculative* Masonry was then formed. Whenever the world should want any truth of a mechanical, geometrical, astronomical or commercial kind it could go to this stone monument, unlock the door and there find the secrets necessary for its further progress. You are to understand that that building contains *all* the sciences to which we will ever attain. There is not a single truth that we have yet arrived at which is not embodied in that building, but when Masonry became speculative, men in some way degenerated and thus lost the key to the great building, preventing them from entering it, and without this key it was very difficult to interpret the great systems of truth that are contained therein, in fact, we know but little concerning it now, and what we do know has come to us by the ripest scholars who had instruments to test and geometrical skill to measure and scientific knowledge to lay it before us, and as we increase in science and knowledge we will increase in the power to interpret the great fund of knowledge stored up in the vast stone building.

The diagram given elsewhere shows the Pyramid cut in two from north to south, and we are looking west. The interior, or sectional view is thus shown. When complete

the Pyramid covered  $13\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and rose to a height of 468 feet and a fraction. The outside casing stones were of white marble, twelve feet in length, five feet in depth, and eight feet in breadth—25 feet altogether, which is the sacred cubit of the Scriptures. When complete, it rose like a sort of diamond mountain with no entrance apparent at any point, yet there was a stone which the pressure of the hand would have turned on a swivel. The secret entrance was not found until a few years ago, when John Taylor, a London (Eng.) merchant, gave special study to the great building, and came to the conclusion that it was measured off astronomically. His studies enlisted the interest of astronomers like Prof. Herschel and Prof. C. Piazzi Smyth. These studied certain stars and conjunctions of stars, and discovered that when their inclination would strike the earth, they would strike Egypt; another minute calculation brought them to the Pyramid, and still another to its north side, 300 inches east of the centre and forty-nine feet from the ground. Thus was discovered the door and thereby produced positive proof that the builders of the Pyramid understood what they were doing and were regulating things on earth according to the law which regulates things in the heavens. There could be no chance in a thing like that. The 300 inches east of the centre, or the axis of the Pyramid, is just that which the earth's axis is askew from the plane of its orbit, so they symbolized the very rotation of our earth in that structure. The door being placed forty-nine feet from the ground corresponds with the inclination. Looking out at the stars, once a year when the north star is at its lowest culmination, you will see that star in line with one of the passageways; another time of the year when that star is at its highest culmination, it is in line with another passageway, so the very stars were made to point an entrance to this great Masonic Temple.

In the ninth century an Arab Chief undertook to effect an entrance and dug for two years. He too started on the north side, showing that tradition had correctly come down to him on that line. The Pyramid was designed to embody all the astronomical and scientific knowledge of the ante-diluvians for our good. The eight survivors of the flood would not want to practise all the sciences. What would eight men want to do with a railroad, or a telephone? These ante-diluvians were, I have no doubt, as wise as we are to-day, and had their railways and telegraphs and telephones. You may say there would not be a sufficient number of them to require these things, but there were more living then, at the lowest calculation, than now, though I would not go as high as Dr. Buck when he says they were *eighty* times as numerous as we are. Make some standard—say you take Abraham's family. In 430 years it would number two millions, on the basis of their lives averaging fifty years, but how many persons would you have in two thousand years when life's average was 400 years? You would find as many living then as now.

People are wonderfully astray in their ideas as to the ante-diluvian world. Adam, as the son of God, was well educated, thoroughly prepared to train his children, and thoroughly familiar with the heavens and earth and all the great secrets of nature. The knowledge given to him was stored up in the Pyramid—knowledge which if we had known would have enabled us to have made a railway engine long ago; to have made an astronomical chart long ago, and to have prepared a standard of weights and measures long ago. There is not a scientific fact we have attained unto that is not confirmed by the Great Pyramid which was constructed, as I have said, for the special purpose of embodying the knowledge of the ante-diluvian world therein, until the inhabitants of the earth after the flood had so increased as to require this knowledge. The

connection was during this time lost between the operative and the speculative in Masonry, and since then it has been chiefly on the line of the speculative. I believe we can trace the origin of the three degrees of Masonry to the construction of the Tower of Babel when there was confusion of languages and the dispersion of the people. I believe that the three sons of Noah then created a Masonic language that should be a sign to all their descendants wherever they might wander. The ability to speak this tongue would be a sure indication that they were of the same race, of the same father and of the same brotherhood, and in this sense, Masonry stands to-day as one of the finest proofs of the unity of the human race in this world. Savage nations have had this institution among them from time immemorial, and how would you get it around the world if you did not start it with those who were dispersed? If you object to that conclusion you have a greater difficulty to account for this fact otherwise than by believing that the three sons of Noah were directed by Shem, their great Grand Master. I was told by Dr. Lang, a member of the Queensland Parliament, of an exploring expedition he made into the interior of Queensland. After travelling two or three days without encountering any natives, his party at last met a tribe whose language neither he nor his native interpreters could understand. The wild tribe were showing signs of hostility when the traveller and his white companion, as a last resort, gave them the signs of the first three degrees of Masonry when several of the blacks responded intelligibly enough to be understood in the Masonic language, and they were thus protected and saved. The question is: How did these natives get these secrets? They had no knowledge of anyone living in the world but themselves, and had lost the traditional idea of white men. They must have got this Masonic language by descent from the dispersion of

the sons of Noah. That is the easiest way to answer the query, and if you try and answer it otherwise you will certainly have more trouble. You remember that General Fremont in his overland route, was attacked by Indians, and was only saved by crying out in this Masonic language, when he at once got protection. Some of the Indian Chiefs seemed to have a sufficient though imperfect intelligence of the language to be understood.

Some begin Masonry with Solomon, but that is a great mistake. Both Solomon and Hiram were as familiar with Masonry as I am. Solomon sent to Hiram, his brother Mason, to come to his help in building the Temple. Nor did Masonry begin two hundred years ago as some writers claim. They mistake lapses and re-reformations for creations just as some people begin the Church of England with the Reformation. Not at all. The Church of England begun in the first century in Britain, and has had an existence ever since, though it has sometimes been up and sometimes down. So Masonry has sometimes been almost crushed by antagonistic rulers but only to rise to view again. It is as old as the Pyramid, and its three degrees, I repeat, originated at Babel, and were spread through the world by the dispersed people. Masonry as a system is peculiar, and yet conservative; it tends to the real interest of the individual as well as to the interests of society collectively. As an organization it accepts certain great principles—principles that are Christian in their very practice. (Applause) I make bold to answer the objection of some that Masonry is placed before the Church. Now, my friend, what do you understand by "the Church," and by Christianity? What is Christianity? That which is right in practice and in experience. Christianity is "twice two makes four," and that, in dealing with a man, you deal with him on that line; it is *truth* in every department, and whoever practises truth, whether under this organization

or that, is a Christian. The trouble is that people confound the organization with the Church. The Church of the living God is composed in its largest sense of all who are saved by the covenant mercies of God in Christ Jesus that have lived, are now living, or who have passed on to heaven. Another meaning is that called the Church militant, composed of those who are now living; others again attach the meaning to the particular organization with which they may be connected, while the building itself is called a Church. The Church can always be divided into two—the spiritual and the temporal, but you must not confound the two. This stone building does not constitute the members of Bond Street Church. *We*, its members, are the real Church; even the characteristics which distinguish the Congregational Church are not *the* Church, but the Christians back of all that constitute it. We are Christians (if we are right) before we are Congregationalists, and because we are Christians we seek some organization through which to work. The true Church is spiritual, and its ideas and principles are truth. Now, the Masonic body is an organization, and so far as it practises the great truths of the Gospel is as much a Church as Bond Street Church. It is the *practice of the truth* that makes a Christian whether he is in this organization or that. Masonry as an organization does practise some of the great principles and truths that Christians do. What Church therefore is *before* it? Will you tell me of one virtue or grace that Masonry does not enforce or teach? Masonry asks you to be industrious, temperate, benevolent, and charitable. If we are true Masons, and if we practise the virtues that every Church teaches, why do you say we are not a Christian organization? I can say that the Masonic body is not a Congregational, a Methodist, or an Episcopalian organization, but to say that Masonry is not Christian is to say what is not true. (Applause) If any

Church makes man more sacred to himself, his family and his country than Masonry does, pray let me know.

There are certain things about Masonry that seem very peculiar to some. It has made a chief point of its charities, and to avoid abuse of our generosity, it was found necessary to protect ourselves to a certain extent, because we all know that there are the providential poor—those who after having done their best need help—and the wilful poor, and a discrimination between these two classes is essential. We soon learn to know whether a member is worthy or not, as we become so intimately connected with him and his habits and business, and if he demoralizes and wastes himself and his means, he loses that strong Masonic grip upon the charities of a Masonic Lodge. We can dispense our charities equally as fairly and equitably as any institution in the world if we choose to exercise our intelligence, thus bringing the really worthy cases to the front. But if a member becomes unworthy of help we are under no further obligation to him than to seek his reformation. A good Mason aims to keep a firm Masonic hold on the fraternity by being worthy, and then, should legitimate misfortune overtake him, Masonic benevolence will surely break the force of that misfortune.

Yet a view of Masonry that takes in only its charities is meagre and limited. Our real work and mission is to be found in our preventative rather than in our benevolent policy. Going back to the origin of Masonry every man had to be qualified in some trade, and he must therefore be a competent man; he must not be a slave, a cripple or an imbecile. He would not be admitted unless he had the ability to earn his own livelihood. That is why Masonry prevents, to a certain extent, the need of charity; in other words, Masonry honours itself more in its non-charities, when rightly conducted, than in its active charities. To stay disease is as good as to cure it; to prevent crime is

as wise as to punish it. A man cannot be a good Mason without helping himself on the lines of industry and care for his own welfare. (Applause.) I do not like to hear Masonry judged as to how much it gives. We ought to be very seldom called upon to give. If I am a true Mason I should be so sober, industrious and careful as seldom, if ever, to make a demand for help upon my brother-Masons, and Masonry ought to inspire such virtues as will help a man to take care of himself. If, then, poverty overtakes him and he suffers, that is a fine opportunity for the exercise of our charity.

I will now read you a letter I recently received, the writer of which is really a very fine person; in fact, I have had several letters of a similar kind from persons who have most extraordinary ideas of Masonry. The letter reads:—

TORONTO, December 15, 1888.

DEAR DR. WILD,—In your sermon of November 25 you were pleading for secret societies, Freemasonry I suppose in particular. You said that it taught a belief in God, and honesty, etc. If so, why were you not honest enough to tell what else it taught? That you were to reject the Saviour, and dishonour Him by not even being allowed to mention His name in your prayers. That it taught that you were bound by oath to defend a Brother whether he was right or wrong. That the oaths which they are compelled to take are unlawful, profane, barbarous, blasphemous and murderous.

If you were honest and a faithful watchman you would have told them these things. A gentleman asked the late S. J. Hunter, a few days before he preached for the Masons in Elm Street Church, how he could consistently preach for them, knowing as he did that their oaths were profane and murderous. He said that their oaths were *profane*. Yet after making such a confession he preached for them, and lauded them up by saying that they pointed towards heaven, when he knew in his heart that they pointed towards hell, that it is of the devil from top to bottom. If you take out the 15 or 20 per cent. of the money which they receive by misrepresentation which they give to the poor, there is not another streak of good in it. "But he loved the praise of men and popularity more than the approbation of God," and I fear the same might be said of you. O Watchman of Zion, what an account you will have to give!

How you can unite in a religion in which all men can agree, Infidel, Pagan, Mormon and Unitarian, and kneel before a pagan altar and say Christless prayers, leaving Christ outside of the lodge as you leave your over-shoes and coat, and then putting Him on when you come out, is something I can't understand. You know that the Masons of France

have expunged the name of Christ and God from their ritual, and you also know that all the mysteries of Masonry are borrowed from paganism. And you know that your Grand Master, Hiram Abiff, is a pagan god. Then you must of necessity be a servant or slave, or both, of a pagan god. You know you have in your lodge a column which represents Baal-peor of the Moabites, called Thallas. You also know that the Masons of New York two years ago last June passed a number of their children before or through the fire to their Masonic Moloch, which is said in the Bible to be an abomination even for pagans to practise. And yet you have the face to stand up in a Christian church and plead for it. Shame!

Yours truly,

R.

There is hardly a single truth uttered in this letter. (Applause) Indeed, I do not know anything that is more blasphemous than some of his utterances, and yet it no doubt arises from ignorance. Of course none of the New York Masons ever passed their children through the fire! Masonic rules obligate upon us those graces and virtues that make us live peaceably with all men, and that makes us loyal to our Queen, and our Country. (Loud cheers) And a man cannot be a Mason and a stirrer up of strife, and an inciter of rebellion, or disloyal to his Queen. I say again to the writer of that letter, who is present to-night, you are *greatly* mistaken, my friend. Can you believe me when I vouch with my very life that you have not a streak of truth in your whole letter? (Cheers) Some no doubt will tell you the opposite, but I tell you *what I know*. We may be defective as Masons in the practice of the virtues imposed upon us, for we are like all men and organizations in that we are imperfect. I say positively to you that Masonry is *not* atheistical, and a man atheistically inclined could not become or remain a Mason unless he were very hypocritical. Masonry is *not* unchristian; it is not opposed to Christianity or Christian organizations; on the contrary we fraternize with them; but *we are not sectarian*. That is the point where we receive the greatest amount of criticism. We are *not* Congregationalists or Baptists or Methodists, but we *are* Masons. It is because we are not

sectarian that many think we are not Christian in our practice and constitution. My correspondent objects that we leave out Christ's name in our prayer. Why do we leave it out in the first three degrees? Because these three degrees were organized thousands of years before our Lord appeared on earth when neither men nor the prophets prayed through Christ but directly to the great God. You might as well destroy the Old Testament because it has not the name of Christ in it as to say that Masons are Christless because His name is not in the first three degrees. (Applause) Being an old and unchangeable institution it has come down to us as it was, capable of taking in all races of men who believe in one true God and in His overruling Providence. But, my friend, in the *higher* degrees the sacred name of our Saviour comes in as sweetly and reverently as in our Church services, but these are degrees that have come in force (or most of them) *after* our Saviour sojourned on the earth. Masonry soon recognized His divine presence, and soon pleaded with Him when He became the Way, the Truth and the Life. Can I set you right on that point? What does a Mason see when he goes into his Lodge? One thing is certain, he would see God's word, and (I'll tell you this secret) as a mace is used in Parliament, in a Masonic Lodge not one iota of work can be done until the Bible is laid open at a certain page directing them in their work. Do you suppose an infidel could be there if he were honest? A Mason has no authority to act in Lodge without the open Bible before him, and God above him, symbolized by the all-seeing Eye watching every movement made in that secret inclosure. Of course you can repudiate all I say, and from time to time men will be injudicious enough to believe mere tattlers instead of those who understand what they say. Pope Leo, in his Encyclical letter two years ago, charged the Masons with menacing the homes, the altars of the Church

and the State. It does nothing of the kind. On the other hand it conserves the sacredness and purity of the home ; that we *know* as Masons. There is not a wife or child of a Mason that is not covered by the Masonic mantle of charity. (Cheers) The idea of Masonry "menacing the altars of the Church," when the altar is the most sacred piece of furniture in every Masonic Lodge, and the very fount and centre from which radiates all our acts ! and instead of degrading it we honour it ! Nor do we menace the State. If we do, we become very un-Masonic in our conduct. We are taught to uphold the peace, to honour the King, to love the Brotherhood, and to be loyal to the interests of the country in which for the time-being we are placed. (Applause).

There are many things in Masonry that may seem peculiar. The All-Seeing Eye is to indicate, as I have said, that the Divine Providence encloses us and the Divine Eye seeth all our conduct. The letter "G" is also very significant, and teaches great and wholesome truths. This letter begins the word "Geometry," which is said to be one of the most perfect of sciences ; it is the seventh letter, and illustrates the perfect number ; it is a perfect geometrical figure in itself, the only perfect one, in fact. As God is the great geometrician, therefore the most perfect way to represent Him is by the geometrical letter "G." The whole alphabet in its form is geometrical. "A"—quantity and quality ; "B"—that quantity and quality divided ; "C"—that enclosed quantity opened up. You need never go any further than "A," "B" and "C," because they contain all the curves and lines of the other twenty-three letters. "D," for instance, is part of "B." As "A, B and C" contain all the curves and lines, "G" has them all in itself ; it means the circle squared and that you work from the centre. It is a remarkable fact that the Pyramid is on the land centre of the earth, latitudinally and longitudinally.

You find many things connected with the Israelites that had very much of a Masonic turn, and Masonry comes down to us through these old patriarchs. Let me read a few verses from the 20th chapter of the First Book of Kings to those who have not much faith in Masonry. Ben-hadad, the King of Syria, came to fight Ahab, but lost the battle. Ben-hadad then escaped and hid in an inner chamber.

And his servants said unto Ben-hadad, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life.

So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is he yet alive? He is my brother.

He here saw the Masonic sign and acknowledged it.

Now the men did diligently observe whether anything would come from him, and did hastily catch it; and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

The words "Merciful Kings," means "Secret (Hebrew, *chessed*) Keepers"; in other words, "Masons," hence the two Kings were made friendly.

There are scores of passages that are not understandable without a knowledge of the Pyramid and Masonry. Take, for instance, Jeremiah xxxii. 18 and 19:—

Thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompense the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: The Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of Hosts is his name. Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: Which hath set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt even unto this day, and in Israel, and among other men.

The word *set* means, in Hebrew, "which has built some wonderful signs in Egypt, which endure unto this day," and there it is in the Great Pyramid. Isaiah xix. 19-20:—

In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord, and it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt.

Where is that pillar, and sign, and altar and witness ?  
It is in the Pyramid, the witness of God.

Take a New Testament idea : The Egyptians were great on mysteries and had Masonry in many forms. Paul refers I think to one of these, the Eleusinian mystery, or the Secret Order of the Prudent. The Temple in which candidates were initiated had a peculiar floor with flues at certain points through which flames of fire could be turned. The candidate for admission into the Order was sent into the Temple to be tested on three points : his wisdom, skill, and benevolence, and he had to build something which, if erected over the flues would of course be destroyed, and and his lack of wisdom proved in not selecting a good foundation, his skill by the thing he constructed, and his benevolence by the material, gold, silver, hay or stubble—a very neat way of proving a candidate's worth. When the testing day comes every man is ordered to stand by his own work, the masters looking on. Now read 1 Cor. iii. 9-17 :

For we are labourers together with God : ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble :

Every man's work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire ; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved ; yet so as by fire.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy ; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

How would you understand a passage like that without getting this mystery in your mind ? And how could you

understand the beautiful spiritual lesson taught without a knowledge of the material ?

Let us feel as the following Masonic poem expresses it :

O Thou Great Architect ! whose laws  
Supremely move effect and cause,  
Through whom the seasons go and come,  
O ! try our actions by the *Plumb*.

Admonish us upright to walk,  
To live, to work, to act, to talk ;  
So may our lives with Thine agree,  
And ever on the *Level* be.

Teach us our every path to guide,  
That we may never turn aside ;  
Abroad, at home, and everywhere  
To meet our Brother on the *Square*.

Pillar of fire by night to lead  
Where most our neighbour stands in need  
And with the *Ark* and *Anchor* prove  
Our faith in Thee, to man our love.

Remind us, Lord, where'er we go  
Through scenes of joy, or scenes of woe,  
The lessons taught us by our art,  
The sword upon the naked heart !

Perfect our life, so be our end,  
To Thee may we by steps ascend,  
By Thee to live, by Thee to die  
Under Thine own " All-seeing Eye."

May I say, in closing, that the Masonic degrees stand out to us in the whole compass of our existence. Life is the apprentice time ; it is here we are taking our first degree, when death comes we pass on to the second degree, and through the resurrection we take our last and third degree, and rest as saints with God.

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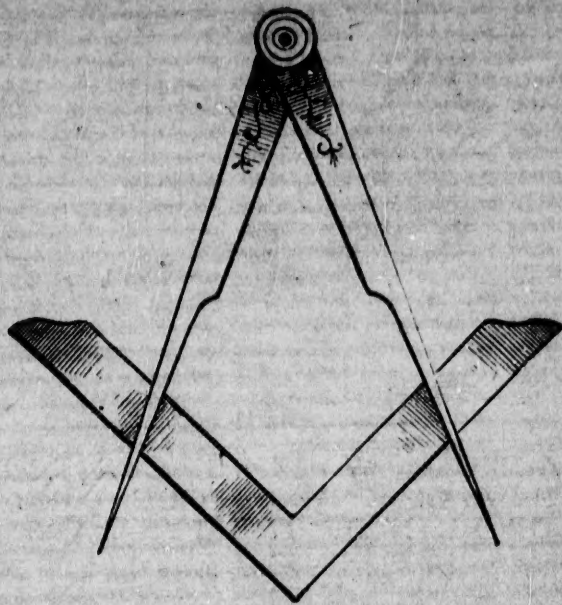
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**B**RO. W. C. MORRISON would respectfully inform his Masonic Brethren that he has moved into the large premises, No. 161 King Street West. Importing direct from the Manufacturers all his Ribbons, Lace, etc., he can give you better and cheaper goods than any house in the trade. M. M. Aprons with solid leather case, each \$3.00, by the half dozen, \$2 50. P. M. Aprons, \$4, \$5 and \$6. Royal Arch Aprons, \$5 and \$6 50 for apron and sash. Principal's Suits, \$10 set. Knight Templar Uniform, from \$36. Send for price list before purchasing elsewhere.

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